

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image processing method for processing an image using image data produced by an image producing device, and image production record information which includes at least information relating to shooting conditions at the time of production of the image data, and which is associated with the image data, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) determining a size parameter value that relates to a size of a subject in the image based on at least one of the image data and the image production record information; and

(b) performing color balance adjustment processing of the image data based on the size parameter value.

2. An image processing method according to claim 1, wherein the color balance adjustment processing is performed for the entirety of the image.

3. An image processing method according to claim 1, wherein the step (a) includes the step of selecting subject distance information obtained from the image production record information as the size parameter value in cases where the image production record information includes the subject distance information relating to a distance between the image producing device and the subject of the image data at the time of the production of the image data.

4. An image processing method according to claim 1, wherein the step (a) includes the step of selecting lens focal distance information obtained from the image production record information as the size parameter value in cases where the image production record information includes the lens focal distance information relating to a lens focal distance of the image producing device at the time of the production of the image data.

5. An image processing method according to claim 1, wherein the step (a) includes the steps of:

calculating a proportion of pixels that have a color close to a preset memory color by analyzing the image data; and

5 selecting the proportion as the size parameter value.

6. An image processing method according to claim 1, wherein the step (b) includes the step of adjusting a processing amount of the color balance adjustment so that the processing amount increases with an increase in the
10 size of the subject indicated by the size parameter value.

7. An image processing method according to claim 1, wherein the step (b) includes the steps of:

(i) determining magnitudes of differences of respective color
15 components of pixels that have colors close to the preset memory color from respective color components of a preset target color in the image data by analyzing the image data; and

(ii) adjusting a processing amount of the color balance adjustment in accordance with the magnitudes of the differences;

20 and wherein the step (ii) includes the step of adjusting a proportion of the processing amount of the color balance adjustment with respect to the magnitudes of the differences so that the proportion is increased as the size of the subject indicated by the size parameter value increases.

25 8. An image processing method according to claim 1, wherein the method further comprises the steps of:

judging whether or not operating settings of the image producing device at the time of the production of the image data are suitably set for portrait images by analyzing the image production record information in cases
30 where the image production record information includes shooting mode information relating to the operating settings; and

performing the step (b) in cases where the judgment is affirmative.

9. An image processing device for processing an image using image data produced by an image producing device, and image production record information which includes at least information relating to shooting conditions at the time of production of the image data, and which is associated with the image data, the image processing device comprising:

an image quality adjuster which determines a size parameter value that relates to a size of a subject in the image based on at least one of the image data and the image production record information, and which performs color adjustment balance processing of the image data based on the size parameter value.

10. A computer program product which is used to process an image using image data produced by an image producing device and image production record information which includes at least information relating to shooting conditions at the time of production of the image data, and which is associated with the image data, the computer program product comprising:

a computer-readable medium; and

a computer program stored on the computer-readable medium;

wherein the computer program includes a program for causing a computer to implement a function which determines a size parameter value that relates to a size of a subject in the image based on at least one of the image data and the image production record information, and which performs color balance adjustment processing of the image data based on the size parameter value.

11. An image output device for outputting an image using image data produced by an image producing device, and image production record information which includes at least information relating to shooting conditions at the time of production of the image data, and which is associated with the image data, the image output device comprising:

an image quality adjuster which can determine a size parameter value that relates to a size of a subject in the image based on at least one of the image data and the image production record information, and which can perform color balance adjustment processing of the image data based on the

5 size parameter value; and

an output unit which outputs an image using the image data whose image quality has been adjusted.